

# C&D recycling gains momentum

**Columbia, SC** – Recycling construction and demolition (C&D) debris makes good business sense when you consider that many of the materials can be reused rather than being landfilled. And given recent disputes between community leaders and concerned residents over the siting of new landfills, diverting this reusable material is gaining momentum around the state.

C&D debris is waste that is generated from various construction, renovation and demolition activities. This waste can come from commercial, governmental and residential projects including office building construction, home renovations and even highway repairs. Materials that can be potentially recycled or reused are concrete, bricks, wood, asphalt, gypsum wallboard, glass, shingles and roofing material, and land-clearing debris.

While the C&D debris generated will vary from site to site, the advantages to reducing, reusing and recycling remain the same. Some of these advantages include: cost saving from avoided landfill fees; generating revenue from the sale of recyclables; and protecting of South Carolina's environment.

There are a growing number of companies that are working to keep these materials out of C&D landfills by processing and reselling them in new products. In the Upstate, Cox and Floyd Grading has been working with area companies as well as government agencies to reclaim C&D waste. With their mobile crushing equipment, Cox and Floyd breaks down, crushes and screens asphalt, concrete and rock into reusable materials that companies can use as an alternative to quarry rock and other virgin material.

According to Randy Floyd, the key to successful C&D recycling is minimizing contamination. His business emphasizes quality control to generate the best product available. One contaminant that is cause for concern is dirt. "Large amounts of dirt can give the finished product a discolored or unappealing appearance, which in turn will make it harder to sell for a good price," Floyd says. "Our success in recycling is making quality control of the raw product our number one priority."

Some of Cox and Floyd's recent recycled concrete projects include demolition projects, wash-out from concrete plants, crushing orphan pre-cast products and highway reconstruction. The company also has worked on several asphalt recycling projects that have created materials used in parking lot topping, cart and walking paths, and asphalt mix for new roads.

The company recently was involved in a road-building project along I-85 in Charlotte where 16 miles of eight-inch thick highway were broken down and removed for processing at a

remote site. The portable crushing and screening plants recycled this material into one-and-a-half inch crusher run material that was then used in the road base. Floyd added that the steel reinforcement bars that initially held the original concrete in place were also recycled as part of this project.

The S.C. Department of Transportation (S.C. DOT) recently worked on a similar project – a 10-mile stretch of I-95 near Florence. As part of this construction project, the 10-inch thick roadway was removed, crushed and reincorporated back into new aggregate. As a result, S.C. DOT recycled about 200,000 tons of concrete from this project alone. In addition to the environmental benefits, S.C. DOT realized a significant cost savings by not having to landfill the existing roadway debris or buying new aggregate. Transportation costs for the project also were reduced because the recovered material was processed within close proximity of the construction project.

Gary Seymore has built a successful recycling business in Piedmont, S.C. Trash Away primarily recycles waste generated by business and industry, handling materials for a number of the Upstate's biggest companies. In 2003, his company recycled between 25,000 and 30,000 tons of materials. Like Cox and Floyd, Trash Away processes a number of C&D materials including land-clearing debris. Seymore has enormous grinders that process wood waste, trees and pallets into mulch. He also handles tires and metal and is looking for new opportunities to expand his business. Seymore says his company's success is a result of his commitment to putting the environment in the forefront of his business. He provides documentation to all his clients detailing the environmentally-sound methods he uses to divert waste from landfills. With many companies working towards ISO 14001 and LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification, his company is the only LEED-qualified recycler in the area.

Ashmore Brothers in Greer is recycling asphalt shingles for use in paving projects. Also working with S.C. DOT, the company has developed a paving specification for asphalt blended with recycled roofing shingles and recently completed a demonstration project using the new blend on Highway 11 in Pickens County. According to David Ashmore, they paved 25 miles of bike lane with 700 tons of shingles being used in the base course material. "That's about 250 truckloads of old shingles that would have otherwise been landfilled," Ashmore said. The material was blended at Ashmore's Anderson plant. The company hopes this project will lead to more paving projects using shingles on S.C. highways.

To learn more about C&D recycling opportunities for your business, call the Business Recycling Assistance Program at **1-800-768-7348**.